

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-11(Cancelled).

12(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket for an internal combustion engine, insertable for the sealing of components having at least one T-junction, said gasket having at least one functional ~~layerportion~~, at least one distance ~~layerportion~~, and at least one seal element- provided in the region of the T-junction wherein the distance ~~layerportion~~ has at least one recessed region extending less than completely through said distance ~~layerportion~~ to a seal engaging bottom surface with a boundary region extending upwardly from said bottom surface and completely surrounding said bottom surface, said recessed region receiving a portion of said seal element in engagement with said seal engaging bottom surface, said portion of said seal element being spaced from at least a portion of said boundary region to provide a void space between said seal element and said boundary region.

13(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket of claim 12 wherein the seal element protrudes outwardly from the recessed region in the direction of at least one of the sealed components and is detached from said at least one functional ~~layerportion~~.

14(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket of claim 12 wherein the distance ~~layerportion in the region of the seal element is associated with~~ abuts said at least one functional ~~layerportion~~, said at least one functional ~~layerportion~~ has an opening at least partially above said recessed portion sized to receive said seal element therethrough in detached fashion.

15(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 14, wherein the seal engaging bottom surface of said recessed region has a larger surface in cross-section than a distance across said opening.

16(Previously Amended). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 15, wherein at least a part of said opening is provided above the recessed region and is essentially parallel thereto.

17(Previously Presented). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein the recessed region is generally oval in form.

18(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein the seal element is partially supported on a boundary region of the distance ~~layerportion~~ surrounding the recessed region.

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19(Previously Presented). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein the seal element is arranged in the recessed region without contacting boundaries of the recessed region and is supported by said bottom surface of the recessed region.

20(Canceled).

21(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 14, at least one hollow channel in said functional ~~layer~~^{portion} is in open communication with the opening and said seal element is partially received in said channel.

22(Previously Presented). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein the seal element comprises at least one silicone worm introduced in the recessed region.